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SUBJECT: U.S. GOVERNMENT ANTI-TRAFFICKING STRATEGY FOR  
NEPAL

REF.: STATE 219965

1. Post hereby submits its anti-trafficking strategy as requested reftel. This document provides information on both ongoing and proposed programs and some results to date.

## 2. Background of Situation

Nepal is a source country for trafficking of children and women mainly to India. Internal Trafficking is on the rise. Trafficking has been largely for prostitution, domestic and other forms of exploitative labor, and in a few cases for organ transplants.

Estimates on the extent and magnitude of Nepal's problem of trafficking vary from source to source. A study done by the International Labor Organization/International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor (ILO/IPEC) in 2001 estimates the number of trafficking victims to be 12,000 per year in contrast to the 5,000-7,000 quoted in earlier publications. The Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare (MWCSW) has identified twenty-six of Nepal's seventy-five districts as trafficking-prone. Those at highest risk of being trafficked are from the hill ethnic groups and lower castes, but members of higher castes have also been trafficked. As awareness and surveillance activities in former source districts have made trafficking from them more difficult, a geographic shift in the activities of traffickers has been observed. Girls as young as nine years old have been trafficked. An increase in cross-border trafficking of boys for exploitative labor has recently been discovered.

A recent study by Nepal's Integrated Institute for Development Studies (IIDS) has identified forty-six NGOs and twenty INGOs and Donors working in the area of trafficking in and outside Kathmandu. Few organizations provide rehabilitation services. Maiti Nepal has a Child Protection and Women Rehabilitation Home in Kathmandu, Hospices in Kakarbhitta and Jhapa, nine transit homes in the five development regions of Nepal, and three prevention homes in the central region. ABC Nepal runs four transit homes in Janakpur (1), Biratnagar (1) and Kathmandu (2). WOREC has a transit home in Dhanusha and community safe houses in Udaipur. A Skill Training Center is operated by MWCSW for the at risk groups.

Three networks actively working against trafficking are the National Network Against Girl Trafficking (NNAGT), Alliance Against Trafficking of Women in Nepal (AATWIN) and Network against Trafficking of Women and Children in Nepal (NATWC).

## 3. U.S. Government's Response

The U.S. Government began to assist anti-trafficking efforts in Nepal in 1997. Programs supported have been in the areas of Prevention, Protection and Prosecution. U.S. Government Agencies supporting anti-trafficking activities in Nepal are the U.S. Embassy Political Section and Public Diplomacy Office, Peace Corps, Department of Defense, Department of Labor, State Department and U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). A Mission Anti-Trafficking Committee has been established to coordinate initiatives and to prepare the annual Trafficking in Persons Report. In addition, USAID has a South Asia Regional Program being implemented by the United Nations Fund for Women (UNIFEM). The program implementing organizations (U.S. funded) are International Labor Organization, World Education, Center for Population and Development Activities (CEDPA), The Asia Foundation (TAF), UNICEF and Nepali non-governmental organizations. The U.S. Department of Labor, USAID and the State Department fund these programs. The Mission Anti-Trafficking Committee has developed the following strategy to guide our efforts based on the three themes of Prevention, Protection and Prosecution and is closely integrated with the development assistance programs in the area of democracy, governance and health. This

strategy includes both bilateral and regional activities.

#### 14. Program Area: Prevention

**Target audiences:** The target audiences for prevention programs are vulnerable women and children, government anti-trafficking task force members, police, immigration and law enforcement agencies, courts, influential community groups, transport workers, elected women leaders, students, teachers and adolescent girls.

The Mission's strategy places primary emphasis on prevention. Priority activities under the prevention program are increasing awareness of trafficking by target groups and providing skill training to vulnerable groups to make meaningful alternative life choices; training NGO workers, community groups and police; conducting literacy programs for out of school girls; researching and studying migration policies; developing Information Education Communication (IEC) messages and a national communication strategy; establishing a Documentation Information Communication (DIC) system; publishing newsletters; strengthening advocacy and co-ordination capacity of NGO network and improving the capacity of district, municipality and village task forces to combat trafficking.

#### 15. Ongoing or Recently Completed Activities

**Awareness raising and information dissemination:** The Asia Foundation (TAF) with current USAID assistance (2001-2004) under its Democracy and Governance program is conducting awareness activities in five districts (Dhading, Nawalparasi, Banke, Chitwan and Dhanusha) identified by the Ministry of Women Children and Social Welfare (MWCSW) as trafficking prone districts. TAF's local district partners are The Women Rehabilitation Center (WOREC), Center for Legal Research and Resource Documentation (CeLRRD), Center for Victims of Torture (CVICT), Agro-forestry, Basic Health and Cooperatives, Nepal (ABC Nepal), Maiti Nepal, Forum for Women, Law and Development (FWLD), National Network against Girl trafficking (NNAGT) and NGO Federation. NGO Federation and TAF are facilitating meetings with district, municipality and village level task forces that have cross-sectoral composition for co-ordination to combat trafficking. UNIFEM is working with various local organizations to raise awareness. ILO/IPEC works through 'Vigilant Groups' at the community level in the bordering districts of Parsa, Jhapa, Rupandehi and Banke to raise awareness and share information on the content of ILO Convention 182, Child Rights Convention (CRC) and other trafficking related issues. Information regarding policy issues is shared at the District Development Committee level.

To educate Nepal's semi-literate audience, a comic book 'Our Decision, Our Protection' was published under the Frights, Responsibility and Advocacy' component of USAID's Women's Empowerment Program in April 2000. 200,000 copies of the book were distributed in the seventy-five districts of the country.

The Public Diplomacy Office under the International Visitor Program sponsors exposure visits of NGO and Govt. professionals working on anti-trafficking issues to the U.S., and invites speakers from the U.S. to provide orientation to their Nepali counterparts on policies and regulations adopted by the U.S. Government.

16. Research and Study: Nepal's Institute for Integrated Development Studies (IIDS) has conducted a study entitled 'Status and Dimension of Trafficking within Nepal' with UNIFEM support under the South Asia Regional Initiative for Gender Equity (SARI/Equity) program in 2002. Under the TAF supported activity, CeLRRD has completed a baseline survey in five districts to assess the situation of trafficking.

Research and studies for better understanding the problem of trafficking have been conducted by ILO/IPEC in 2000-01. The four studies are entitled 1. Trafficking in Girls with Special Reference to Prostitution: A Rapid assessment, 2. Trafficking and Sexual Abuse among Street Children in Kathmandu, 3. Cross Border Trafficking of Boys and 4. Internal Trafficking among Children Engaged in Prostitution.

17. Development of IEC Messages and National IEC Strategy: CEDPA has prepared a compendium of IEC materials. From the review of the materials, a list of messages and associated behaviors have been drafted that will form the basis for developing the National IEC Strategy. Establishment of a Documentation Information Center (DIC) within the ministry to collect and

disseminate information on trafficking has enhanced the capacity of Ministry of Women Children and Social Welfare (MWCSW). The aspect of information collection and documentation has been strong but the present situation of security has resulted in weak dissemination of information, as the DIC is not easily accessible.

**18. Publication of Newsletter:** With the objective of raising awareness on various topics, four volumes of the 'Combat' newsletter have been published by MWCSW/ILO/CEDPA since 2000, two more volumes will be published within 2002. The focus topics of the newsletter are health, education, legislation and enforcement, income generation, and employment generation and promoting anti trafficking behaviors. Similarly NNAAGT publishes a regular newsletter to disseminate information related to trafficking activities.

**19. Training and Capacity Building:** Under the current TAF program, specific training is being provided to selected target groups. WOREC provided rights based training to senior level staff and community level trainers of partner organizations to improve knowledge within communities and among government personnel of the problem of trafficking in their respective districts. A training manual on 'Safe Migration Alternatives' was prepared in consultation with Ministry of Labor and Transportation (Molt) and overseas employment agencies. Training is being provided to partner organizations using this manual to enable them to deal/orient potential migrants on issues related to safe migration.

**110. Strengthening Advocacy and Co-ordination Capacity of NGO Networks:** Training and orientation provided regularly by NNAAGT is strengthening advocacy and co-ordination capacity of the NGO networks and its members to combat trafficking.

In June 2000, UNIFEM initiated the formation of the South Asia Forum against Human Trafficking (SAFAHT) to strengthen the regional network. The second regional meeting of SAFAHT was conducted in May 2001.

**111. Improving the Capacity of District, Municipality and Village Task Forces:** Nepal's District, Municipality and Village Task Forces (DTF, MTF, VTF) are being strengthened for cross-sectoral co-ordination to combat trafficking by implementing/enforcing the existing National Plan of Action. ILO/IPEC is working with the DTF, MTF and VTfs in four districts, Jhapa, Parsa, Rupandehi and Banke and TAF in the selected five districts.

**112. Literacy Programs:** World Education initiated the Girls Access to Education (GATE) program (2001-2002) to prevent trafficking by educating "out of school" adolescent girls and preparing them for the challenges of womanhood. 7,500 "out of school" girls from seven districts were the target audience of this program. An impact evaluation of the GATE program in the first year showed a considerably high percentage of increase in knowledge amongst the girls regarding trafficking and about preventive measures. USAID/Nepal has extended support to GATE activity for another year through SO2 Health Program.

World Education, through its current 'Brighter Future Program' aims to provide literacy to 17,000 children in the ag group of 10-14 who are engaged in the 'worst form of child labor' and 65,000 'children at risk' in twenty-two districts of Nepal over a period of four years (2002-2006). World Education will be working in the same districts as ILO/IPEC for their Time Bound Program (2000-2005) to eliminate child labor. Trafficking is one of the focus areas of this program. ILO/IPEC initiated provision of non-formal and formal education in 45 Village Development Committees (VDCs) of three districts, which are Chitwan, Makwanpur and Nawalparasi. The target audience for the awareness program through education is 4,500 school children and equal number of adults.

**113. Budget**

Approximately US DOLS 1,233,816 has been obligated for the prevention programs by USAID/Nepal and Washington. UNIFEM is funded under the South Asia Regional Initiative for Gender Equality (SARI/Q) programs of USAID and has a funding for approximately US DOLS 3.1 million for the whole region. World Education has been granted US DOLS 4,000,000 in 2002 by Department of Labor for expanding literacy and other skill development programs for occupational reintegration. ILO/IPEC has been granted US DOLS 5,000,000 in 2002 by Department of Labor to implement the Time Bound Program.

**114. Proposed Activities**

Some of the proposed activities for prevention are continuation of awareness programs on trafficking and safe migration, setting up information booths for migrant workers, setting up micro-enterprise activities for meaningful employment opportunities for at risk groups, a regional study on demand and supply for trafficking, and support to strengthen the Government's Village and District Task forces. Estimated cost for these programs is DOLS 1,002,000. ILO/IPEC will replicate the ongoing activities in four cluster districts of the eastern region in the near future.

#### 15. Indicators for Program Monitoring

- Mechanisms for cooperation on anti trafficking activities between government and NGOs established and operational.
- Sustainable NGO networks working against trafficking.
- Increased anti-trafficking advocacy and services by organizations and networks already mobilized around other women's and children's issues.
- Increased knowledge of trafficking and preventive measures by target groups.

#### 16. Program Area: Protection (Rescue/Rehabilitation)

Target audiences: The target audiences for protection (rescue/ rehabilitation) are victims of trafficking, some at risk girls and women, police, and NGOs assisting victims.

Priority and funded activities for protection are sensitization programs for service providers and law enforcing government agencies, support to transit homes, research-study on best practices for alternative livelihood strategies and training for gainful employment opportunities.

#### 17. Ongoing or Recently Completed Activities

Sensitization Program: UNIFEM and UNICEF sensitize police at border crossings in handling rescued/repatriated victims. US Embassy/State and the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) conducts anti-fraud training for immigration and customs officers. The last training was conducted in 2001 and included a presentation on trafficking by ABC Nepal. Other governmental officials, NGO representatives and third-country Embassy personnel also attended. NGOs and community groups have been sensitized to the issues of HIV/AIDS and its relation to trafficking and the need to rehabilitate returnees of trafficking under USAID/Nepal's Health program.

18. Training: CVICT has provided training to strengthen the capacity of NGOs providing rehabilitation and counseling for trafficking victims, abused women and children, and at risk groups. CVICT has also assisted partner organizations to set up a case study documentation system and establish local referral practices. UNICEF is supporting training of the police for investigative crime scene management. ILO/IPEC supported developing the curriculum for the counseling training and is coordinating efforts to take this manual to the regional level. ILO/IPEC will build capacity of NGOs to promote national standardized guidelines on childcare facilities.

19. Research-study: WOREC/TAF are conducting a study on best practices for alternative livelihood strategies. UNIFEM/Sarthak carried out a need assessment study to review the existing status of socio-psycho counseling expertise in Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.

20. Gainful Employment Opportunities: UNIFEM has supported 'Shakti Samuha' (a group of fifteen returned victims) with occupational reintegration by assisting in the establishment of a photocopier business center. Three members of 'Shakti Samuha' are undergoing skill training to handle the business efficiently. Maiti Nepal and TAF are working for an effective scheme for job placement of returnees. World Education under the 'Brighter Future Program' will have a component on occupational reintegration. ILO/IPEC will provide professionalised training to the affected group for occupational reintegration.

21. Transit homes: ILO/IPEC has supported Maiti Nepal to establish transit homes in Kakarbhitta and Bhairahawa. UNIFEM has supported ABC Nepal to establish a transit home in Delhi. International Organization on Migration (IOM) has supported ABC Nepal and WOREC to establish transit homes in Kathmandu and Dhanusha. Besides these

organizations 'Karuna Bhawan' and 'Shanti Rehabilitation Center' also assist the returnees.

#### 122. Budget

Approximately US DOLS 112,000 has been obligated for the ongoing programs by USG funded UNIFEM program.

#### 123. Proposed Activities

Proposed protection activities (rescue/rehabilitation) are continuation of the sensitization program, operating the counseling program, and enhancing the capability of the rescued girls for meaningful employment through occupational training and job placement. Estimated cost for the proposed programs is US DOLS 350,000.

#### 124. Indicators

- Innovative rehabilitation and reintegration strategies ready for replication
- More and higher counseling services available to trafficking survivors
- Increased employment options for trafficking survivors

#### 125. Program area: Prosecution

Target audiences: The target audiences for prosecution are law enforcement agencies.

Priority funded activities under prosecution are technical assistance and advocacy for adoption of a new anti-trafficking law, improved enforcement of legislation and creation of missing persons' components in the Nepal National Police information and criminal investigation system. The other activities are sharing information with destination country police, prosecutors' workshop on case management and successful prosecution, improvement of court procedures to protect victims.

#### 126. Ongoing Activities

Advocacy for Adoption of New Anti-Trafficking Law: TAF and UNIFEM/FWLD reviewed the existing anti-trafficking law, provided recommendations for amendment and advocated and lobbied for the passage of the new anti-trafficking law. The Lower House of Parliament passed the bill introduced by the MWCSW in the Twenty First Parliamentary Session.

127. Improved Enforcement of Laws: UNICEF supports training for basic investigative and crime scene management techniques for prosecutors and judges, prosecutor's workshop on case management and successful prosecution, and improvement of court procedures to protect victims. UNIFEM supports initiatives to share information with destination country police.

128. Missing Person's Inventory: A missing person's inventory is being created by the Nepal National Police Information and Criminal Investigation system with UNICEF support.

#### 129. Budget

Approximately US DOLS 75,000 has been obligated for the ongoing activities by INL/UNIFEM.

#### 130. Proposed Activities

Proposed activities for effective prosecution are training on new legislation for effective enforcement, establishment of improved court structures for protection of the victims and strengthening the capacity of women cells of police and training at border crossings. The estimated cost of approximately US DOLS 220,000 for the proposed programs has been provided by INL. UNICEF has been contacted regarding implementation of the program.

#### 131. Indicators

- Legal framework that better protects the rights of women and girls
- Increase in the number of traffickers arrested
- Increase in the number of traffickers convicted

#### 132. Conclusion

U.S. Government Agencies in Nepal are highly committed to the prevention of trafficking and protection of its victims. Comprehensive programs have been initiated to

reduce vulnerability of women and children from being trafficked by raising awareness, increasing literacy/educational level and providing skill training for occupational reintegration. Counseling capacity has been improved through training and best rehabilitation practices are being replicated for the protection of victims. Legal bodies, Government task forces at different levels, and law enforcing agencies are being trained/oriented for proper enforcement of laws and policies and to take necessary actions against the traffickers. Similarly, existing laws and policies are being reviewed for necessary amendments.

However, minimum coordination amongst supporting agencies and lack of unity among NGOs is an obstacle to achieving desired result. Lack of comprehensive baseline study is another hindrance to measuring the success of activities implemented. Other factors that provide a nurturing ground to trafficking of women and children in Nepal are weak law enforcement system and high level of corruption among law enforcement bodies. A lack of political will to place the issue in the national priority agenda, the open border with India and the need for a study regarding the demand (India) and supply (Nepal, Bangladesh) aspects of the problem are other dimensions to the issue. The holistic approach and programs supported by the USG in Nepal and the region are expected to address these gaps.

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